

A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

HIGH-IMPACT FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



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Agenda for Discussion

- Important new research:
 - Why is Family Engagement Important?
 - What does High-Impact Family Engagement Look Like?
- How is Connecticut Positioned to Move Toward Higher Impact Policy and Practice?

1. Why is this Important?

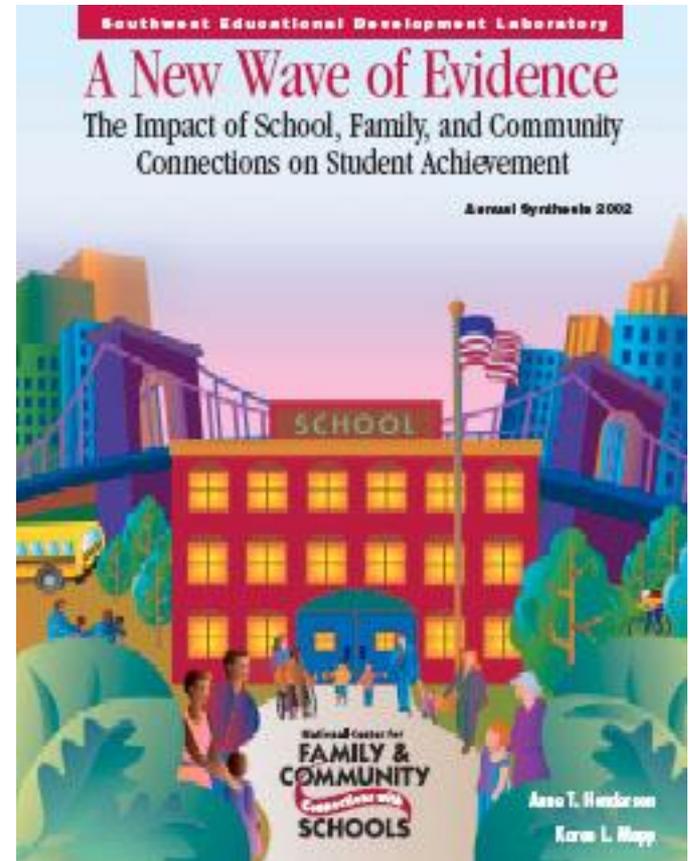


A New Wave of Evidence

Family Engagement Has a Powerful, Long-Term Impact on Student Achievement

By Anne T. Henderson
and Karen L. Mapp

www.sedl.org/connections



Overall Finding:

When families are engaged at home + at school:

- Children do better in school and
- Schools get better, all the way through high school.



If Parents are Engaged, Students from All Backgrounds Tend To:

- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Enroll in higher-level programs
- Be promoted and earn credits
- Adapt well to school and attend regularly
- Have better social skills and behavior
- Graduate and go on to higher education

School Practices are KEY

The strongest predictors of whether parents are engaged:

Specific school programs *and* teacher practices that invite, encourage and guide parents to become involved.

Dr. Joyce Epstein
Johns Hopkins University



2. What Does Good Look Like?



Important new studies
reveal *high-impact*
strategies

What Do Parents Want?

- *Family engagement means that parents are seen as **welcome partners** in the education of children, and have a **valued voice** in the school.*
- *As a result, families are **active participants**, and **communication is flowing between home and school**.*
- *We believe that family engagement means **mutual respect, honesty and trust**.*

(Connecticut parents, August 2017)

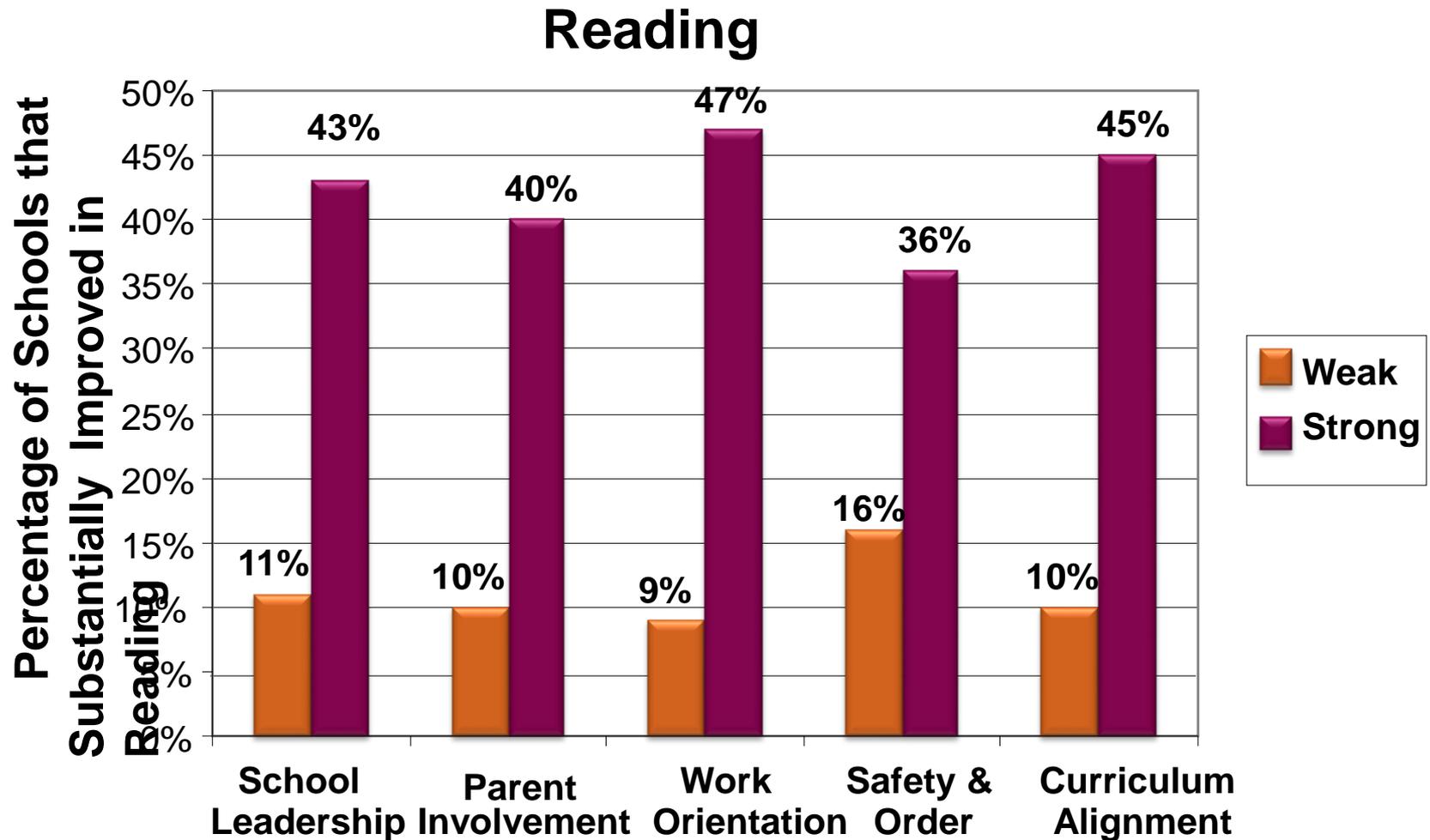
Strong Ties to Families and Community

Schools with *strong family and community ties* were **4x** more likely to make reading and math gains.

- ❑ **Teacher ties to community:** Understand local issues, spend time in community, use local resources.
- ❑ **Teacher outreach to parents:** Invite parents to observe in class, try to understand parents' concerns, and embrace parents as partners
- ❑ **Parents respond:** Become involved in school activities and respond to teacher concerns about schoolwork.

Anthony S. Bryk et al, (2010) *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)

How Likely Is Major Improvement, Given Weak or Strong Supports



Conversations about Learning

- Program focus is raising achievement for UK students with special needs, ES-HS
- Linchpin of program: *Structured Conversations* between teachers and parents
- AFA students did 25% better than all UK students and 50% better than non-AFA special needs students.



Teacher Outreach

Students' reading and math scores improved **40-50% *faster*** when teachers:

- Met with families face-to-face
- Sent materials on ways to help their child at home
- Telephoned routinely about progress

Combine High-Impact Strategies



Home Visits + Class Meetings that Link Family Engagement to Learning

- ❑ Build 1:1 relationships
- ❑ Share knowledge and goals for child
- ❑ Explain class data
- ❑ Focus on skills
- ❑ Develop a shared plan
- ❑ Share progress
- ❑ Evaluate

Improved student performance

The Ripple Effect of Parent Leaders



Guiding Principles from CT

How?

Trust and Respect	1. Build collaborative, honest, respectful relationships focused on learning.
Two-way conversations	2. Listen to what families say about their children's interests and challenges.
Link family engagement to student learning	3. Model high-quality learning practices.
	4. Share information frequently with families about how their children are doing.
	5. Talk with <i>students</i> about how they want teachers and families to support their learning.
Cultural competence	6. Co-develop cultural competence among staff and families.
Parent leadership	7. Support parents to become effective leaders and advocates for children.

How is Connecticut Positioned?

- ❑ A definition of family engagement developed with extensive input from parents and families, that is widely admired and adopted by others
- ❑ A framework with guiding principles that are co-created with parents and educators AND aligned with the latest research
- ❑ A State Roundtable of key stakeholders, including parent leaders, that advises the State Commissioner of Education



How is Connecticut Positioned?

- ❑ Member of an initiative led by the Council of Chief State School Officers and funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- ❑ One of 13 states selected for a Federal grant to create Statewide Family Engagement Centers offering information, resources, training, and communities of practice for local districts.
- ❑ School Governance Councils required to help low-achieving schools improve

How is Connecticut Positioned?

- Long history of offering programs to support local districts to advance family-school partnerships, such as the Parent-Teacher Home Visit Project, 21st Century Community Schools, Family-Friendly Walk-Through, and Academic Parent-Teacher Teams.
- Long-standing membership in National Network of Partnership Schools, founded by Joyce Epstein at Johns Hopkins University

How is Connecticut Positioned?

- Development of CREC's Self-Assessment system: Guiding Partnerships w Schools -GPS
- Close working relationship with NAFSCE, the new national organization with a mission of advancing high impact family and community engagement policy and practice to improve children's learning and development.

What's Next?

- Putting it all together!
- Creating a vibrant statewide community of practice
- Linking Partnerships closely to School Improvement Practice
- Evaluating its effectiveness
- Constructing a robust role for the Roundtable

Resources

- **Partners in Education: Dual Capacity-Building Framework**

<https://www.dualcapacity.org>

- **Parent Teacher Home Visit Project:**

www.pthvp.org

- **Video on Home Visits:**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y03oP_RRg9U (9mins)



Resources

- **Academic Parent-Teacher Teams:**
<https://archive.globalfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/academic-parent-teacher-teams-reorganizing-parent-teacher-conferences-around-data>
- **Beating the Odds college pathways assessment toolkit**
<https://eric.ed.gov/?q=ED522170>
- **Website on re-doing School-Parent Compacts:** www.ctschoolparentcompact.org
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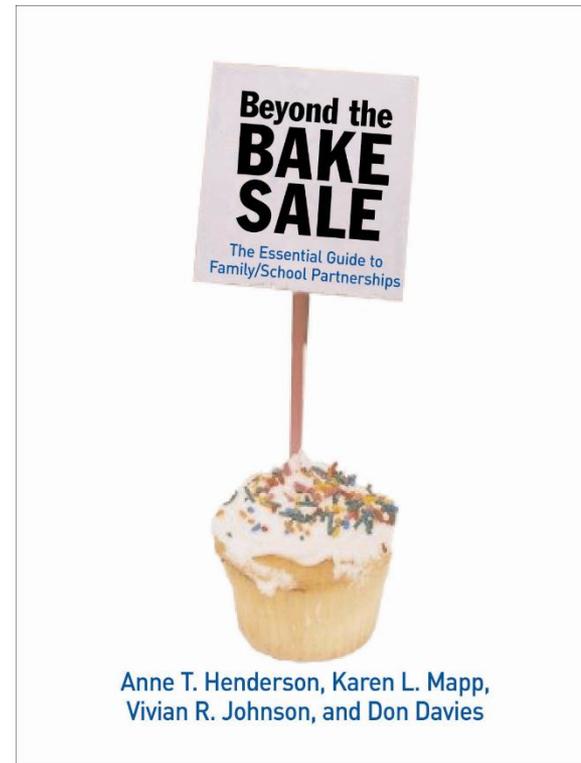
Beyond the Bake Sale

The Essential Guide to Family- School Partnerships

**Anne T. Henderson, Karen L.
Mapp, Vivian R. Johnson and
Don Davies**

The New Press, 2007

www.thenewpress.org/bakesale



NAFSCE: Join Us!

The National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement offers:

- A website filled with information about the field
- Opportunities to network
- Communities of practice
- Professional development
- Advocacy for better policy and more resources

To learn more, go to: www.nafsce.org



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